(c) if so, the reactions thereto and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what is the quantum of compensation given to the affected families?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government have strongly taken up the matter of incidents of firing on Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy with the Government of Sri Lanka. The need for the Sri Lankan Navy to act with restraint and for our fishermen to be treated in humane manner has been repeatedly emphasised to the Government of Sri Lanka.

(c) In response, the Government of Sri Lanka have denied that their Navy ever enters Indian territorial waters and claimed that their Naval ships were not deployed in areas where the incidents occurred.

(d) An immediate cash relief of Rs. 1 Lakh is being paid to the legal heir of the deceased by the Government of Tamil Nadu from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund. Apart from this, the family of the deceased fisherman is being paid a sum of Rs. 50,000 under the Fishermen Accident Group Insurance Scheme, if the deceased is a member of any Fishermen Cooperative Society.

Joint mechanism for terrorism

†2614. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any consensus had emerged to formulate a joint mechanism to eradicate terrorism in the fourth round of dialogue held between the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether Pakistan had put forward a condition to keep the violence in Jammu & Kashmir out of the purview of the anti-terrorist joint mechanism;

(c) if so, the decision that has been taken by Government in this regard;

(d) whether Pakistan Government have agreed to hand over the most wanted criminals hiding in Pakistan to India?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The first meeting of India-Pakistan Joint Anti-terrorism Mechanism took place on 6-7 March 2007 in Islamabad. At this meeting,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

both sides agreed that specific information would be exchanged through the mechanism for helping investigations on either side related to terrorist acts and prevention of violence and terrorist acts in the two countries. It was also agreed that while the Anti-terrorism Mechanism would meet on a quarterly basis, any information which is required to be conveyed on priority basis would be immediately conveyed through the respective heads of the mechanism.

(b) Statements by some Pak leaders that issues related to Jammu and Kashmir would be outside the purview of the mechanism have come to the notice of Government.

(c) and (d) During the Prime Minister's meeting with President Musharraf of Pakistan in Havana in September 2006, it was decided to put in place an India-Pakistan anti-terrorism institutional mechanism to identify and implement counter-terrorism initiatives and investigations. In line with the Havana agreement between the two leaders, the mandate of the mechanism agreed in the March 6, 2007 meeting does not envisage any exception.

Peace process in Sri Lanka

2615. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether External Affairs Minister visited Sri Lanka during January 2007 to hold top-level talks on the progress of the peace process in Sri Lanka and also conveyed India's concern about the Tamils living in Sri Lanka;

(b) whether Lankan Foreign Minister visited India in March 2007 and discussed on regional cooperation, security issue, bilateral affairs;

(c) whether Sri Lanka and India agreed for joint Indian naval patrolling in the Palk Strait to prevent possible recurrence of attacks on Indian fishermen; and

(d) whether India is enhancing security measures at major ports in the wake of possible terrorist attacks on vital installations?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes. Minister of External Affairs visited Sri Lanka on